



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)



What is RCI?

RCI stands for Residential Communities Initiative. It is a Department of Army program that will improve the quality of life for soldiers and their families. A private company will be responsible for family housing management, new construction, renovation and maintenance.

Who is the private developer for Fort Rucker Family Housing?

The Army and RCI staff selected Picerne Military Housing as the partner to privatize family housing at Fort Rucker. Picerne Military Housing is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Picerne Real Estate Group, a family-owned company that has created quality housing throughout the United States and Puerto Rico since 1925. Picerne Military Housing was also chosen by the Army to privatize housing at Fort Meade, Maryland; Fort Bragg, North Carolina; Fort Polk, Louisiana; and Fort Riley, Kansas.

Who is Rucker-Picerne Partners?

Rucker-Picerne Partners is the partnership between the Army/Fort Rucker and Picerne Military Housing and will be responsible for all family housing on-post. Both the Army/Fort Rucker and Picerne Military Housing will direct the activities of Rucker-Picerne Partners.

Who will manage housing on Fort Rucker?

Picerne Military Housing will have overall management responsibilities. However, the Army/Fort Rucker will be involved in ongoing operations.

What is the Community Development and Management Plan (CDMP)?

The RCI staff and Picerne Military Housing have jointly developed the CDMP. The CDMP is the business plan and blueprint for the 50-year life of the partnership for Fort Rucker Family Housing. The Department of the Army, Department of Defense, Office of Management and Budget and Congress approved the CDMP and the Notice to Transition began January 3, 2006. The CDMP was submitted to Congress in September 2005.

How will the change to privatized housing affect current residents?

Residents will get personalized property management, maintenance and family services at each Neighborhood Office. Lawn care will no longer be the responsibility of the residents. Picerne will only require a surface clean condition upon move out, eliminating the need to hire a cleaning company. A Resident Occupancy Agreement (ROA) with Rucker-Picerne Partners will be required to live in Fort Rucker family housing. Starting April 1, 2006, the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) will be shown on service members' LES as an entitlement and an allotment will be shown as payable to Rucker Communities as rent. (BAH equals rent.) Take home pay will remain the same.

Will this change cause me to have to move?

As construction proceeds, some on-post moves may be required. Any required move will be to another on-post house that has been renovated or is new or is an upgrade to the current home.

Can you explain more about the Resident Occupancy Agreement?

The ROA is the equivalent of a lease for a home rented off-post, except that it has been written specifically for military families. The agreement is for 12-months, unless PCS or ETS orders require a shorter term. All residents in the home need to be identified on the agreement.

What happens if the sponsor has already deployed?

If the sponsor chooses, the SJA has developed a Special Power of Attorney (SPOA), which enables the spouse to sign the ROA and start the BAH allotment. There will be a command information campaign to let the deployed sponsors know about the new family housing requirements.

The most convenient way to complete this process is to have the sponsor sign the ROA and send it directly to Picerne via the Chain of Command or US Mail. This eliminates the need of a Special Power of Attorney for the spouse or family member.

Can a spouse sign the ROA with a General Power of Attorney?

Yes. The general rule is that the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) requires a Power Of Attorney (POA) to start an allotment. However, if your General POA contains a specific grant of authority allowing your agent to start, stop or change an allotment with DFAS, DFAS will allow your agent to start the allotment to a third party lockbox for housing. If the General POA does not contain the above wording they can still sign the ROA but will need a Special POA to initiate the allotment. If the sponsor signs the ROA or if the spouse, who has the proper Power of Attorney(s), signs the ROA, the allotment will be started automatically by the Government.

How can we get a copy of the ROA if we know our spouse is getting ready to deploy?

Copies of the ROA and SPOAs are available at Family Housing and the Picerne Military Housing office located in Bldg. 2908 Andrews Avenue.

Can you explain more about the BAH entitlement and rent allotment?

The rent allotment will equal the soldier's BAH entitlement for their rank for the period of time that they reside in family housing. The allotment will reflect any BAH increases or decreases the soldier incurs.

Will the changes affect my LES and net pay?

The BAH amount will appear on the left side of the LES under entitlements. The rent allotment will appear in the third column of the LES under allotments for an amount equal to the BAH. Soldiers will see no change in their net pay.

What are the differences if I am married to another service member?

Both Service Members (SM) will receive the appropriate BAH. The residents' rent will equal only the senior grade SMs BAH at the with-dependent rate. The other SM will keep his or her BAH.

How will the rent be paid to Rucker Communities and what does it cover?

The signed ROA gives the government authorization to start the rent allotment for payment to Rucker Communities. The rent covers the total cost for living in the home and the associated utilities. Rucker Communities represents the partnership that is made up of Rucker-Picerne Partners, LLC, and the Army.

What happens if I stop the rent allotment?

Stopping the rent allotment while living in on-post family housing is a breach of the ROA. If the sponsor does not allow for the BAH allotment, the sponsor will be required to move off-post.

What happens when I need to move out (by way of PCS orders or moving off post)?

For residents living in family housing prior to 1 April 2006, 45 days written notice is requested in order to break the ROA agreement. Residents must contact their neighborhood management staff to establish a move-out date. If the move must occur sooner than 45 days, appropriate orders must be presented. If you are moving prior to 1 April 2006, you are not required to sign an ROA. If it is not a military-directed move, the resident is responsible for moving expenses and the 45-days written notice.

What other requirements exist when moving out?

Picerne Military Housing will only require the home to be surface cleaned, i.e.: floors vacuumed and swept, appliances/counter tops/cabinets wiped clean and trash removed.

When will the rent allotment stop?

Once Picerne Military Housing has officially cleared the resident, and any charges for damages (beyond normal wear and tear) have been paid, the allotment will be stopped. After move out, any refund due will

be made within 5 business days after Rucker Communities receives the allotment for the last month's rent.

How does the new housing program impact resident responsibility?

Picerne Military Housing has a Resident Responsibility Guide detailing the rules and regulations for the neighborhoods. Current residents will not experience any significant changes to existing rules. Picerne Neighborhood Managers will work closely with the Sponsor Unit NCOs in each neighborhood who will help to ensure that resident responsibilities are maintained.

Who do I call for maintenance?

As of 1 April 2006, residents will contact their neighborhood management staff in their Neighborhood Office. Picerne's neighborhood staff will be responsible for all maintenance as well as service order requests. Residents will be able to submit work requests by telephone, fax, Internet or in person.

How does this new housing program impact community standards (Army Regulations)?

Fort Rucker Regulation 210-50 will no longer be the governing document. However, enforced community standards will be applied using the partnership guidelines that are outlined in the Resident Responsibility Guide provided upon signing the ROA.

The Garrison Commander will continue his authority to take appropriate actions when required.

Picerne's Neighborhood Managers work closely with the RCI Office, ACRs [what are these?] and Mayors of the housing areas.

Do I need to obtain renter's insurance?

Occupants are highly encouraged to obtain Renter's Insurance to cover losses caused by the occupant's negligence. Under the new program, there is limited coverage, paid through part of your BAH allotment.

How will the change affect families planning to live on post?

Soldiers who choose to live on post will be required to sign a housing agreement called a Resident Occupancy Agreement (ROA) with Rucker-Picerne Partners (a lease agreement). Soldiers living in on-post family housing will begin receiving Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) once the ROA is administered through the Army pay system. Rent will be paid in the form of an allotment equal to BAH. Utilities and limited renter's insurance are included. Take-home pay remains the same. Short- and long-term improvements will be made to on-post housing.

Can you tell me more about the lease agreement?

Yes, each Soldier [earlier in the document you weren't capitalizing Soldier] living in family housing will be required to sign an ROA. A special power of attorney must be provided to the spouse if a Soldier is not available to sign. The ROA is a document that is similar to a lease you might sign off-post for housing. It will be accompanied by a Resident Responsibility Guide (RRG) that describes the terms of the agreement.

When will I have to sign the ROA?

Incoming residents will sign the ROA when a house is accepted. Those already in family housing on post must sign before 1 April 2006

Will I have to make a second move at a later date?

Most renovations will occur between occupancy when houses are vacant. Once new homes are built, residents will likely move from other areas on post targeted for major renovation or demolition. Any required move will be to a larger, better quality on-post home and the government will pay for the move.

Will there be any out-of-pocket expense once the ROA is signed?

No. The components of your BAH (rent, utilities and limited renter's insurance) are paid for. There is about a Congressionally mandated plan for metering electricity and gas in new or fully renovated homes in the future. That might require someone to pay an expense if the usage of electricity or gas exceeds the allowable baseline. This will not go into effect until at a later time at Fort Rucker. You will still be responsible for cable-TV and telephone/computer connections.

Will Army families be responsible for their utility cost?

The Department of Defense has issued a new policy that will require the family to *eventually* assume responsibility for excessive utility usage. When this occurs, a sample of homes will be metered and a study will be conducted to determine the baseline utility usage based on the size and type of home. Usage reports will be sent to families for a period before any billing for overages starts. The families will be required to pay the difference if utility costs exceed the baseline for utility usage that was determined in the Department of Energy study. On the other hand, if the family uses less than the baseline utility amount, they will receive a rebate or credit for the difference.

Can you explain more about the BAH entitlement and rent allotment?

Currently, occupants of on-post family housing do not receive their Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH). Under the new program, all Soldiers in on-post family housing will receive BAH. This entitlement will be initiated by the sponsor's signature on the ROA (lease agreement), or by an authorized spouse's signature using a Special Power of Attorney. This entitlement will start automatically when Picerne assumes operational responsibility for on-post family housing at Fort Rucker April 1, 2006. The rent allotment will equal the BAH entitlement for the period of time that you reside in on-post family housing at Fort Rucker. Take-home pay will not change.

How will BAH be collected?

The Army has contracted with the Military Assistance Company for a fully automated financial BAH payment system to interface with the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS). This system will facilitate starting, managing, tracking, updating and stopping military payroll allotments to pay the rents in support of the RCI privatized family housing program.

Will the changes affect my LES and net pay?

Soldiers will see no changes in the net pay amount. The amount will be the same as in previous LESs. In other words, take home pay stays the same. The BAH amount will appear on the left side of the LES under entitlements. The rent allotment will appear in the third column of the LES under allotments for an amount equal to the BAH amount.

What are the differences if I am married to another service member?

Both service members will receive the appropriate BAH. Your rent will equal the senior grade member's BAH at the "with dependent" rate. The other service member will keep his or her BAH.

When will the rent allotment stop?

Rent stops on the agreed move-out day.

Will we still mow our own grass?

No. Under the new plan, all grass in the housing area will be mowed by a subcontractor for the new housing partner, Picerne Military Housing.

Will military members have to pay for trash pick up?

No. Trash pick up will be included in the rent.

Will military members have to pay a security deposit?

No security deposit will be required.

Will there be a requirement for a pet deposit?

No pet deposit will be required.

Who will I call for maintenance?

Call your Neighborhood Office. Maintenance will be performed by Rucker-Picerne Partners at the neighborhood level. Picerne will be responsible for all maintenance, as well as service order requests. Neighborhood Offices are conveniently located in each of the three on-post neighborhoods, with management and maintenance representatives available seven days a week. Extended office hours allow for better service to residents.

If you have additional questions you would like addressed, please contact Picerne Military Housing by mail, phone, fax or e-mail:

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